

ACUPUNCTURE CHANNELS AND POINTS

The Secondary Channels

The Secondary Channels



most superficial

cutaneous regions

minute collaterals

sinew channels

luo-connecting channels

primary channels

divergent channels

eight extraordinary channels

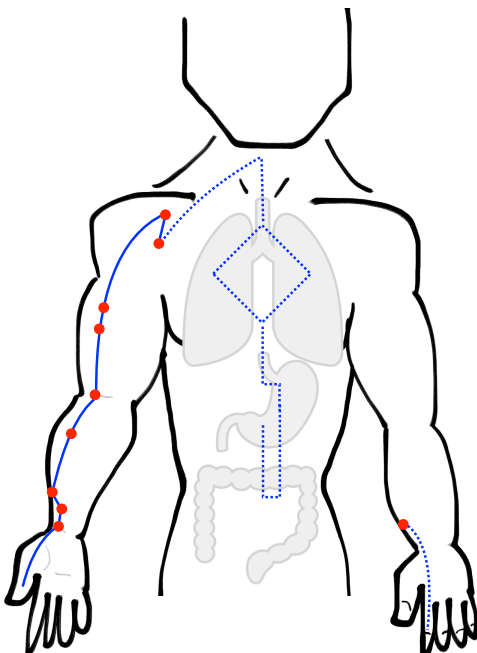
deep pathways

most deep

Functions of the Channels

1. Connect the body, balance and harmonize the various aspects of the body, render the body an integrated whole
2. Circulate qi and blood to nourish the body
3. Protect the body
4. Respond to dysfunction in the body
5. Transmit qi to the diseased area

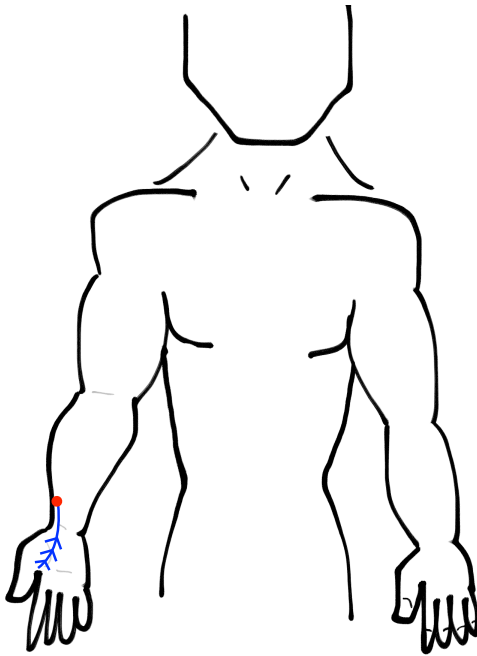
Internal Pathways



Lung Primary Channel

- The **external pathways** are the superficial parts of the 12 primary channels. This is where the acupuncture points lie.
- The **internal pathways** are the deep portions of the primary channels that enter the body cavities.
- Each channel is connected to its own organ and its yin/yang pair through the internal pathways.
- Internal pathways may also connect to other organs or tissues.
- Knowing the course of the internal pathway helps us understand the functions of the points on that channel.

Luo-Connecting Channels



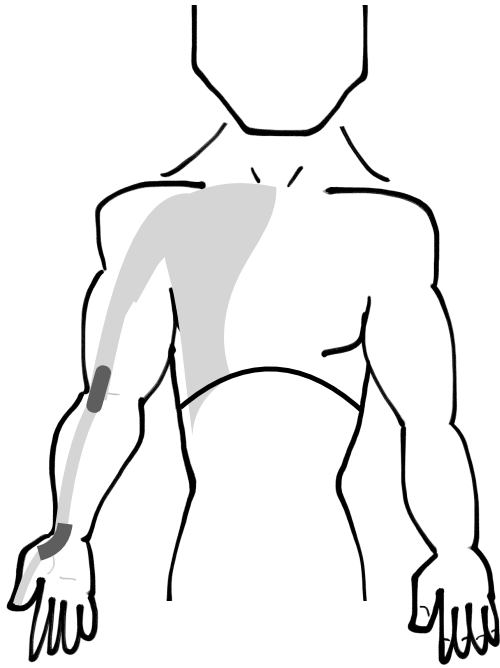
Lung Luo-Connecting Channel

- Luo-Connecting channels branch out from the primary channel and are distributed superficially over the body.
- Luo-Connecting channels strengthen the connection between internally-externally paired channels and organs.
- Luo-Connecting channels branch off at the Luo-Connecting point, then travel to meet with the internally-externally paired channel.
- There are 15 Luo-Connecting channels: one for each of the primary channels, one for each of the Ren and Du channels, and one Great Luo of the Spleen.

Luo Channel Functions

- Balance yin and yang in the limbs
- Nourish the superficial and deep areas of the body
- Protect the body and circulate defensive (wei) qi
- Warm the muscles
- Connect left and right sides of the body
- Connect the interior with the exterior
- The Deep Connecting channels play a role in making blood

Sinew Channels



Lung Sinew Channel

- Also called Tendino-Muscular Meridians (TMM)
- Sinew Channels broadly follow the course of their associated primary channels, as well as major muscles groups, tendons, and ligaments.
- Sinew channel originate at the extremities and ascend to the head and trunk. They do not connect to organs.
- Sinew Channels can reflect disease of the primary channels, or they themselves can be injured (by trauma or external pathogens).
- There are no specific points for Sinew Channels. They can be accessed by shallow needling (Ahshi points), massage, cupping, gua sha, etc.
- Sinew channels have certain “binding” or “knotting” points along the channel, usually at major joints.

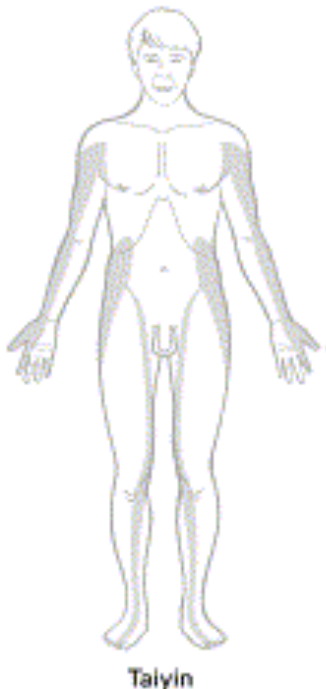
Sinew Channel Functions

- Protect the body from trauma
- Sustain the body in an upright position
- Connect the ‘100 bones’
- Govern movement of the joints and allow body to move
- Contribute to the integration of the surface of the body to the interior
- Contribute to integration between the three yang channels and the three yin channels
- Nourished by the primary channels

The Minute Collaterals

- The Minute Collaterals are not mapped.
- They are like small blood vessels or capillaries.
- This is the way for qi and blood to reach every part of the body.

The Cutaneous Regions

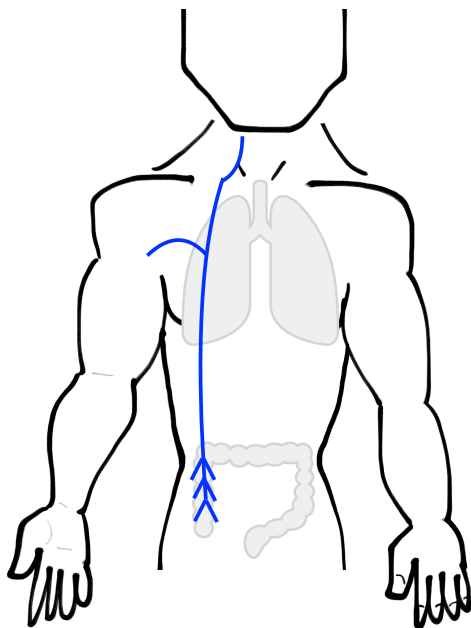


- The Cutaneous Regions are areas of the skin overlaying the 12 primary channels.
- External pathogens can penetrate through the skin to the deeper aspects of the channels and organs.
- Cutaneous Regions can reflect disorders of their associated channels or organs (e.g. discoloration, abnormal sensations, or skin conditions)
- Explain how treatments at the skin level (e.g. lineaments) can have a therapeutic effect at the deeper levels.

The Divergent Channels

- **Jīng Bié (经别)** : the *channel divergences* or *divergences* from the *primary channels*
- Divergent Channels run deeper than the primary channels.
- Divergent Channels run from the lower part to the upper part of the body.
- Divergent Channels generally:
 - **Diverge** or separate from their primary channel
 - **Enter** related organs
 - **Emerge** near the neck
 - **Converge** or join with the related yang primary channel

Functions of Divergent Channels



- Strengthen yin-yang relationships between paired channels and organs.
- Distribute qi and blood to the head and face.
- Connect areas that are not connected by the primary channels (e.g. HT and KI)
- Explain functions of certain acupuncture points

Eight Extraordinary Vessels

奇經八脈

qí jīng bā mài

odd channels eight vessels

The twenty-seventh difficult issue: Among the vessels are eight single-conduit vessels which are not touched by the movement of the qi circulating through the twelve main channels. What does this mean?

It is like this. The eight single conduit vessels include the yang wei and yin wei vessel, the yang qiao and yin qiao vessel, the chong vessel, the du vessel, the ren vessel and the dai vessel. None of these eight vessels is touched by the movement of the qi circulating through the main channels. Hence, they are called "single-conduit" vessels.

There are twelve main channels and fifteen network channels, twenty-seven altogether. Qi moves up and down through these channels, following their respective courses. What does it mean when it is said that only the eight

single-conduit channels are not touched by the movement of qi circulating through the main channels?

It is like this. The sages of antiquity devised and constructed ditches and reservoirs and they kept the waterways open in order to be prepared for any extraordinary situation. When rains poured down from heaven, the ditches and reservoirs became filled. In times like that, when rain floods rushed wildly, even the sages could not make plans again. Here in the organism, when the network-vessels are filled to overflowing, none of the main channels could seize any of their contents, and it is only then that the surplus contents of these vessels flow into the single-conduit vessels.

-Nan Jing

Eight Extraordinary Vessels

Ren	<i>Conception Controlling Directing</i>
Du	<i>Governing</i>
Chong	<i>Penetrating</i>
Dai	<i>Girdle Belt</i>
Yin Qiao	<i>Yin Motility Yin Stepping</i>
Yang Qiao	<i>Yang Motility Yang Stepping</i>
Yin Wei	<i>Yin Linking</i>
Yang Wei	<i>Yang Linking</i>

Eight Extraordinary Vessels

- There are eight “extraordinary” channels that are outside the flow of the twelve primary channels.
- These vessels branch off from the primary channels and interlink the primary channels to each other.
- Only the Ren and the Du have their own points. The other six share points with the primary channels.
- We sometimes refer to the “fourteen channels,” meaning the twelve primary channels plus the Ren and Du vessels.

Functions of Eight Extra

1. Act as reservoirs of qi and blood

- Like reservoirs during a heavy rain, when qi and blood of the primary channels overflows, the eight extraordinary vessels accept the surplus

2. Link the primary channels

3. Protect the body and circulate wei qi

- The Ren, Du, and Chong circulate defensive qi over the chest, abdomen, and back, protecting the body from exterior pathogens.

4. Regulate the 7- and 8- year cycles of women’s and men’s lives

- The Ren, Du, and Chong are linked with the Kidneys and Kidney essence and thus have an influence in the life cycles.

Treating the Eight Extra

	Master	Coupled
Ren	LU-7	KI-6
Du	SI-3	UB-62
Chong	SP-4	PC-6
Dai	GB-41	SJ-5
Yin Qiao	KI-6	LU-7
Yang Qiao	UB-62	SI-3
Yin Wei	PC-6	SP-4
Yang Wei	SJ-5	GB-41

When the single-conduit vessels receive evil qi which stagnates in them, swellings and heat will result. In this case one has to hit the respective vessel with a sharp stone.

- Nan Jing, Chapter 28

The Gao and Huang

- The Membranes (*Huang*) and Fat Tissue (*Gao*) fill the chest and abdominal cavity, similar to connective tissue.
- The membranes wrap, anchor, and connect the organs.
- The Huang are influenced by the Ren and Chong vessels. These vessels can be used to treat abdominal pain due to qi stagnation in the Huang.
- The term Gao-Huang can also refer to the space between the Heart and the diaphragm.

The Cou and Li

- Texture (Li) refers to crevices in the body, the space between structures.
- Cavities (Cou) are large spaces that house organs. They are related to the triple burner (chest cavity, upper abdominal cavity, lower abdominal cavity).
- The cavities are a site of convergence of original qi and true qi.
- The Cou-Li can also refer to the space between the muscles and skin where defensive qi circulates.
- The Cou-Li can also refer to the pores, which regulate sweating.